

REMARKS

The Examiner has imposed a Restriction Requirement and requested that the Applicants elect one of the following three identified groups of claims for prosecution in the present application. The groups are as follows:

Group I, including claims 1-11, drawn to a security product; or

Group II, including claims 12-19, drawn to a method of manufacturing a security product; or

Group III, including claims 20-23, drawn to a method of confirming authenticity.

In response to the Examiner's restriction requirement, Applicants elect to prosecute Group I, including claims 1-11, with traverse. Applicants specifically reserve the right to file one or more divisional applications directed to the non elected claims.

In restricting the claims, the Examiner alleges that the Groups do not relate to a single general inventive concept under PCT Rule 13.1 because the Groups allegedly lack "the same or corresponding special technical features. For the following reasons: the limitations of claim 1, though shared between all inventions as a special technical feature, does not define a contribution which each of the claimed inventions considered as a whole, makes over the prior art because Beghelli et al. (US 2002/0114931) disclose a security document on paper which comprises conductive and non-conductive polymers." It is further alleged that although Beghelli does not explicitly disclose a security mark, one having ordinary skill in the art would have found it obvious to provide the final document with some indicating means to show the person validating the document where the authentication feature (i.e. circuit) is located.

Under Unity of Invention practice, the requirement of Unity of Invention is considered fulfilled where a group of inventions is claimed in one and the same international application and there is a technical relationship among those inventions involving one or more of the same or corresponding special technical features. The expression "special technical features" means those technical features that define a contribution which each of the claimed inventions, considered as a whole, makes over

the prior art.

As admitted in the Office Action, there are special technical features shared between all of identified groups alleged to correspond to separate inventions. Further, it is alleged, without documentary support, that it would have been obvious to one of skill in the art to provide a security mark as recited in the pending claims. However, the mere allegation of obviousness cannot support such a rejection without further evidence. Additionally, Beghelli also fails to disclose or suggest that the security layer is so configured as to form a figure that may be electrically conductive or electrically non-conductive to represent a visual mark.

Moreover, according to the rules of Unity of Invention, an international or a national stage application containing claims to different categories of invention will be considered to have Unity of Invention if the claims are drawn to one of the following combinations of categories:

- 1- a product and a process specially adapted for the manufacture of the product; or
- 2- a product and process for use of the product; or
- 3- a product, a process specially adapted for the manufacture of the product and the use of the product; or
- 4- a process and an apparatus or means specially designed for carrying out the process; or
- 5- a product, a process specially adapted for the manufacture of the product, and an apparatus or means specifically designed for carrying out the process.

As the alleged groups of claims relate to at least one of the aforementioned categories, specifically defined as having unity of invention, the restriction of the claims is incorrect and should be withdrawn (see 37 C.F.R. §1.475(b)).

For all of the above stated reasons, reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding restriction/election requirement and favorable allowance of all claims in the instant application are earnestly solicited.

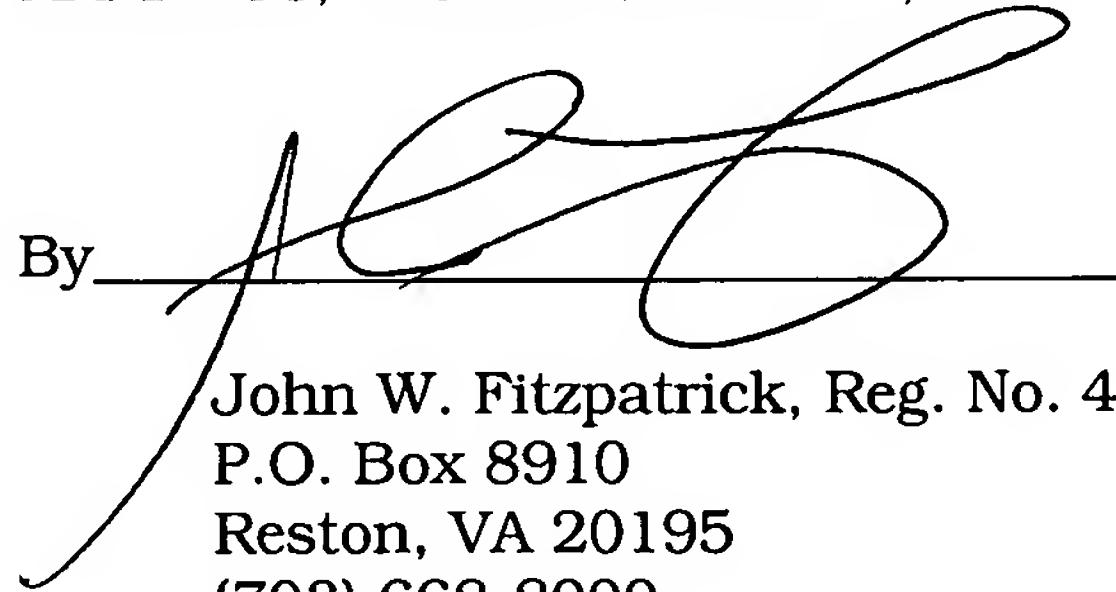
U.S. Application 10/551,936
Atty. Docket No.10400-000299/US

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 08-0750 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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